

## **Nathan Davidson to Andrew Jackson, July 14, 1804, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.**

### **N. DAVIDSON TO JACKSON.**

New Orleans, July 14, 1804.

*Dear Sir* , Your letter of 24th. June addressed to B D and Co.<sup>1</sup> has been duly received, and as it expresses sentiments pointed to me, I have taken the liberty to address you in my own name. It becomes incumbent on me to state as near as possible the particulars of this business done for your House, and by which you have conceiv'd yourself so much injured; I cannot but suppose it is from misinformation or sentiments of this kind would never have come from you.

1 Boggs, Davidson, and Co.

When your Mr Hutchings arrived here with the Cotton, it was seen by him that it was impossible to effect a Sale at any thing like a saving price, the nominal price being only 13\$ french wt. and this he objected to take, several days elapsed before any thing was done.

I did not conceive that I had any direction whatever of the Cotton, either as to its sale or its destination, Mr H. being on the spot, as partner, and owner of the Cotton, could best judge what might be best for your interest. True it is Sir, that in a conversation with you the last time we met, you stated that the Cotton should be sent on to me to this place, and at the same time expressed a pointed objection to Ship to Europe and requested to sell on

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the spot. Had the business been left on this footing a sale should have been made here at the best possible price.

But on the 28th. Febry. after you had started from home, and when at Gallatine, I received pr. Mr Anderson your letter wherein you advised me you had concluded to send on Mr Hutchings, *with the Cotton* , “that he had sufficient funds in his hands to discharge all the debts, and that he had proper instructions to dispose and apportion the amount, and requesting I would receive our claim at this place. this I conceived paramount to any directions given to me, and as I have before observed when Mr H. arrived, I did *not* conceive myself in any power to act, except by his direction, other, than giving such advice as in my power to do, he might request.

When Mr. Hutchings asked my advice as to the destination, or what had best be done, I gave him such as at the same time I should have done to any one else, and which I thought best for his interest, and *in* which if any inconvenience was suffered we loose our proportion. At the same time observed in the conversation as to the shipment to Liverpool of a part, that to me you had expressed a disapprobation to a foreign shipment, but observed, that I believed it best for your interest, and at the same time, requested that he would write you; and state that it was advice of mine, and not an act, *this he promised to do.*

When Mr H. had made up his mind to ship it, having put it on board *himself*, *I can pledge my honor* that no agreement was made or even talk'd of as to advance, other than that expressed in the receipt given him, nor would I have made any other.

I will here remark, that you are under mistaken idias as to advantages accruing to the shipping merchant, from Shipments of this kind made, it is of no kind of interest or benefit to us, and we do it purely to accommodate. and we beg you to take it in this light. We only receive the advances which, we ourselves make, and on which we pay interest from the very day it's made, untill the property is sold, and the Consignee in Cash.

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As to interest being stopt on Debts due by the shippee, it is more than ever we know, nor do we believe it is the Case, as it respects ourselves we can in truth say we are not in want of such assistance, for as yet we have been able to meet our engagements abroad without ever a charge of the kind, and were it even the Case, this shipment of yours which you have chose to infer we have used for this object, would be but a sorry assistance to us I assure you.

You are also mistaken as to interest charged on the shipments of the last Year. The Enquiry I recollect you made of me when at Nashville. I stated that the interest on # d. should cease on the shipment being made and the other # when the sales were received, *and on which we loose* , but which I chose to allow in Stothart and Bell's instance as the quater part was a payment to ourselves.

But Sir to the point. I was totally uninformed as to any agreement being made between Mr Massey and Mr Hutchings. if so, why not Mr H. mention it to me. Mr Massey may have expressed as in his opinion it would neat 17 or 18 Cents. and so did I, or should not have advised a shipment. But does it follow that we should make an advance of price that there is a probability of its neating, in failure of which we should lie for at least one season independent of our debt under a heavy advance to you. No Sir, at the time it was done I conceived we were doing for you even more than could be expected in making an advance on a price much above the Market here, and which appeared perfectly satisfactory to Mr. Hutchings.

As to giving Bills for the amount of the two thirds. it could make no kind of difference to us, and had Mr Hutchings expressed a preference for them he should have reced them. but as a further shipment was to be made, and we supposed you would be in Philada. when the direction for payment would arrive, I conceived nothing further necessary than to direct Mr Boggs what was to be paid on your accot. and you with them could make the destribution, and *this also appeared to be satisfactory to Mr H.* Mr Boggs was by the first opportunity

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advised of the shipment with direction to appropriate the Sum as you might order, and which there is no doubt but has been done, if you have left the list with you[r] agent.

As to the business transacted with Mess and Caves both of which were entire strangers to me as to business. The offer of an advance was made by Mr Massey (through me) it was done by a mistaken calculation of his, and they benefited by it. and will inform you that for him I had a great desire to be off the Contract.

As to an offer made you by Messrs. Clifford when at Nashville, I knew of none, nor would it have had any influence with me, or induced any offer from me. The Only benefit we have or need is a common commission here for transacting the business, and it can be of no more interest to us in shipping to an European Port, than an Atlantic one, and in this branch we shall always strive to give satisfaction here. It surprises me that Mr Hutchings when here should appear perfectly satisfied with every thing done by us for him, that he should receive the receipt, which when I delivered read to him, *and which he confessed to be correct* , and then on his return home to state what you relate respecting our Conduct, is truly to me astonishing. I am convinced you must have given this business no reflection or you would not have formed the conclusion you have expressed in your letter.

I have already by direction of your partner when here and shall again, direct G and W. to Close the Safes immediately. Yours etc